

We're finding that students who've completed interviews and shooting are struggling to focus in on the story they want to tell. If they use either or both of these two tools – a 5-Step Outline and identifying 5 Soundbites – they'll have an easier time writing a script.

5-Step Outline

Once your students have completed their interviews and shooting, a 5-step outline can help them figure out the story they want to tell. It helps them see through what seems like an overwhelming amount of interviews and video.

The 5-Step Outline is 5 bullet points. It is action-based and listed in the order you'll tell the story:

For example, Maryknoll High School is doing a story about a teacher who persuaded the legislature to pass a bill to preserve ancient Hawaiian fishponds.

1. A teacher comes upon an ancient Hawaiian fishpond and meets a kupuna who explains the cultural and historic significance of the site.
2. The teacher finds out the fishpond is on public land and is going to be sold by the state.
3. He forms a group to save the fishpond.
4. He and the group write a bill that prohibits the state from selling off fishponds. They get it passed by the Hawaii's legislature – saving the fishpond and others around the state.
5. Now that the law is in place, the teacher is working toward fishponds producing fish and contributing to sustainability in the future.

5 Soundbites

Now that your students have a 5-Step Outline, they have the framework for their story. Another helpful tool comes from Waianae High's Searider Productions.

Identify the 5 strongest soundbites to tell your story. Arrange them so they tell the story. Now write an introduction, then the bridges between the soundbites that make for a coherent story.

NOTE: The 5-Soundbite approach might work best for a personal profile story, while the 5-Step Outline approach might work best for an event-driven story.